

**Draft Summary of the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group Meeting
Oroville Facilities Relicensing (FERC Project No. 2100)
January 16, 2003**

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) hosted a meeting for the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group on January 16, 2003 at the Depot restaurant in Oroville.

A summary of the discussion, decisions made, and action items is provided below. This summary is not intended to be a transcript, analysis of the meeting, or to indicate agreement or disagreement with any of the items summarized, except where expressly stated. The intent is to present a summary for interested parties who could not attend the meeting. The following are attachments to this summary:

Attachment 1	Meeting Agenda
Attachment 2	Meeting Attendees
Attachment 3	Flip Chart Notes
Attachment 4	Status Update for Recreation and Socioeconomic Studies
Attachment 5	Recreation and Socioeconomic Studies Plan Relationships
Attachment 6	Executive Summary – Draft Interim Report on Recreation Critical Path Studies
Attachment 7	Interim Projects – Status Update
Attachment 8	Modeling Presentation
Attachment 9	DWR Public Meeting Announcement
Attachment 10	Draft Schedule for Plenary and Work Group Meetings: November 2002 – January 2004

Introduction

Attendees were welcomed to the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group meeting. Attendees introduced themselves and their affiliations and the desired outcomes of the meeting were discussed. The meeting agenda and list of meeting attendees are appended to this summary as Attachments 1 and 2, respectively. Meeting flip chart notes are included as Attachment 3.

Action Items – November 21, 2002 Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group Meeting

A summary of the November 21, 2002 Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group meeting is posted on the relicensing web site. The Facilitator reviewed the status of action items from that meeting as follows:

Action Item #R51:	Include Dept. of Boating & Waterways info for SP-R6.
Status:	This information is in the process of being collected and will be used in SP-R6 (ADA Accessibility Assessment)
Action Item #R52:	Ask Curtis Creel if there are plans to operate the reservoir at lower levels in the future (more water earlier to southern California).
Status:	Curtis Creel made a presentation to the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group at this meeting discussing this issue. Please refer to meeting notes presented below for more information.
Action Item #R53:	Send study plan binder to J. Fletcher.
Status:	The Facilitator confirmed that a binder was sent to Mr. Fletcher.

Study Plan Implementation Update

John Baas and Tom Wegge with the consulting team provided an update on the complete set of recreation/socioeconomic studies based on information in the progress tracking report form (see Attachment 4). To preface the update, John briefly described the relationships between the recreation/socioeconomic studies (see Attachment 5). This handout categorizes the studies by type and shows how they feed into the overall objective of the studies - the development of a comprehensive Recreation Plan for the Oroville facilities. The inventory studies are ongoing and the critical path studies are approximately 80 percent complete. The projected demand study (SP-R12) will start in late winter/early spring. By the end of 2003, all 19 studies and an initial draft of the recreational needs analysis (SP-R17) are expected to be complete; the latter representing some key input for the development of the Recreation Plan. John reported that 18 of the 19 studies are underway, but all are at different levels of completion. Recently, there has been an emphasis on SP-R3 and all of the critical path studies.

Participants discussed the preparation and presentation of interim reports. Many of the reports are quite lengthy and detailed so the participants agreed that executive summaries of interim reports will be provided at the Work Group meetings and copies of complete interim reports will be available to the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group participants upon request after they have been reviewed by DWR.

For updates on specific study plans, including schedule, status, and issues or concerns, please refer to Attachment 4. Additional information discussed at the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group meeting that is not included in Attachment 4 is summarized below:

SP-R1

The roads included in this evaluation are listed in the text of the study plan.

SP-R2

Site visits in support of this study will be occurring prior to the next reporting period.

SP-R3

Project operations (i.e., pool elevation) data has been collected. Anecdotal interviews of regular users expected to last approximately 10-15 minutes will be conducted. The focus of the interviews will be on individual perceptions of changes in lake levels and subsequent changes in use levels.

SP-R4

The focus of this study will be on management of the Oroville Wildlife Area (OWA).

SP-R5

The focus of this study will be on the recreation areas outside the OWA. It was suggested that this study utilize ORAC public meeting minutes to acquire information on recreation management. There were concerns expressed regarding conflicts between the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and the public, and the potential for biased data. These issues have been raised at previous meetings and several participants believed that these concerns should be noted on the project tracking form (Attachment 4). It was clarified that the project tracking form was intended to address logistical and administrative "issues", not individual concerns of Work Group participants; these concerns are handled through the Work Group meeting process.

SP-R7

Information on SP-R7 is included in the interim report prepared by the consultant team; the Executive Summary of the interim report was distributed to the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group (see Attachment 6).

SP-R8

This study is scheduled to commence fully in spring 2003.

SP-R9

Information on SP-R9 is included in the interim report prepared by the consultant team; the Executive Summary of the interim report was distributed to the Work Group (see Attachment 6). The trail counters being used in this study were recently moved to collect data from other locations.

SP-R10

Revision of the Recreation Facility and Condition Inventory is currently in progress.

SP-R11

The significant work effort associated with this study will take place later in the year, focusing on the periods before and after the high-use recreation season. This study will focus on physical impacts.

SP-R13

SP-R13 represents the biggest component of the interim report. For the most part, all survey data collected as part of the Year 1 studies has been entered into the database. The next step in this study is to work with local focus groups to get information on specific activities. One participant asked if the trail logbooks have been used in this study. John Baas responded that they have not yet been incorporated. Participants asked whether there would be the need for follow-up surveys in 2003. The consultant team acknowledged that there would be data collection efforts on wildlife observation activities and river boaters as well as whitewater activities that can be collected during summer events.

SP-R14

The next step in this study is to review regional literature on recreation at other sites. The intent is to identify barriers to visitors recreating at Lake Oroville.

SP-R15

This study will not fully start until summer 2003. It will consider recommended PM&Es.

SP-R16

Video has been taken of the study sites and the consultant team is planning to work with focus groups and utilize a mail survey in the near future.

SP-R17

The Recreation Needs Analysis represents the synthesis of all other recreation studies. As such, it is in its early stages. The goal is to have a draft completed by the end of 2003.

SP-R18 and SP-R19

The community impact models are in the process of being developed. A Technical Review Team (TRT) meeting was held in December 2002. The major work effort recently has been preparation of the Background Report, which is broken up into two phases. Phase 1 is currently under development while Phase 2 will be completed in the spring. The TRT will next meet on February 27th.

Update on Interim Projects

Doug Rischbieter, Resource Area Manager for the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group led the discussion on the status of Interim Projects. A handout was distributed to the participants summarizing the status of each project (please refer to Attachment 7). Issues raised regarding

interim projects include the need for coordination with UP Railroad on the Lakeland Boulevard access project; the current use of the Afterbay for waterskiing and how that use is inconsistent with the California Fish and Game Code; and the status of retrofitting some of the floating campsites for use during the winter. The participants questioned the status of additional projects that were thought to be part of the interim projects list including hiring staff at the OWA and land acquisition for various uses. DFG reminded the participants that the State has a hiring freeze that precludes hiring additional staff. The Facilitator will review past meeting summaries to determine the fate of the land acquisition requests that were forwarded to the Land Use, Land Management and Aesthetics Work Group.

Update on Joint E&O/Recreation Modeling Activity

Curtis Creel, DWR's Resource Area Manager for Engineering and Operations presented an overview of the primary purposes for releasing water from Lake Oroville and the effect those releases have on lake levels. Water is released from Lake Oroville for four purposes: (1) local water supply; (2) local instream and downstream requirements; (3) flood management; and (4) to support State Water Project deliveries. Two examples were presented that showed the allocation of water to these four purposes. The first example was for 2002; although it was classified as a dry year, the split among the purposes are similar to what would be expected for a "normal" water year – Curtis indicated the split would be about 1/3 for local water supplies, 1/3 for instream and downstream needs, and 1/3 for SWP deliveries. The second example was for 2001 which was classified as a very dry year. In that case, the majority of water released from the reservoir was for the purpose of meeting local water supply needs, and instream and downstream requirements. About 4% of the water released in 2001 was for the sole purpose of supporting SWP deliveries. In general, water from Lake Oroville is allocated to supply the local Feather River service area and meet instream/downstream requirements first. Only, after considering the first two purposes is water allocated for SWP export.

Curtis also provided information on how Lake Oroville operations may be effected by changes in the various release requirements. To illustrate the point, he provided two graphs showing changes in lake water levels; the first graph showed the effect the current Bay-Delta standards have on Lake Oroville water levels. These standards, imposed by the State Water Resources Control Board in 1995, establish additional environmental requirements to protect fisheries that migrate from the Central Valley rivers as well as those fish that reside in the Delta. The second graph compared lake operations between the current level of water use within the State to a future level of water use (2020). It was noted that the results from these modeling efforts would be used in SP-R12; therefore, it is important that the outputs of the modeling effort are in a format suitable for the use in the recreation studies. Curtis's presentation is included as Attachment 8 to this summary.

Participants also discussed development of the recreation model to be used in SP-R12. The model will likely be a hybrid of two or three existing recreation models. The Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group will be updated next month on the status of the recreation model.

Next Steps

The Facilitator informed the participants of the progress being made within the Plenary Group's Process Protocol Task Force toward the development of a method for submitting and discussing potential protection, mitigation, and enhancement (PM&E) measures. The participants discussed concerns about the development of potential PM&Es prior to completing and analyzing study data and asked if there was a chart that shows specifically by month how the studies will progress. The consultant team responded that they have developed a study schedule specific to the recreation and socioeconomics studies and agreed to distribute it to the participants. They also reported that Kearns & West, as part of the consultant team, has also developed a Gantt chart for the entire project.

DWR distributed a draft notice for an upcoming meeting to address the joint-use trail issue (see Attachment 9). This is an existing license issue but FERC has directed DWR and DPR to notify members of the Collaborative about the public meeting to be held on February 10, 2003 at the State Theater in Oroville. Several participants raised questions regarding the 'proposed plan' mentioned in the notice and were directed to contact Eva Begley, Chief of DWR's License and Regulatory Compliance Section.

The Facilitator distributed a revised meeting schedule that included proposed meeting dates for all Plenary and Work Group meetings through December 2004 (see Attachment 10).

Next Steps

The Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group agreed on the following meeting date/time:

Date: Thursday, February 27, 2003
Time: 6:00 to 10:00 PM
Location: Kelly Ridge Meeting Room

Action Items

The following list of action items identified by the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group includes a description of the action, the participant responsible for the action, and item status.

Action Item #R54: Use trails data from logbooks in SP-R9.
Responsible: Consultant Team
Due Date: *Ongoing*

Action Item #R55: Distribute recreation study schedule to Work Group
Responsible: Facilitator (via John Baas – Consulting Team)
Due Date: February 27, 2003

Action Item #R56: Clarify with DPR the status of winterizing floating campsites as an interim project and also road upgrades.
Responsible: Facilitator
Due Date: February 27, 2003

Action Item #R57: Follow-up on status of land acquisition projects.
Responsible: Facilitator
Due Date: February 27, 2003